

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Bennett College Historic District

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number Roughly bounded by E. Washington, Bennett & Gorrell sts not for publication N/A

city, town Greensboro vicinity N/A

state North Carolina code NC county Guilford code 081 zip code 27401

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
15	2	buildings
1	0	sites
2	1	structures
1	0	objects
19	3	Total

Name of related multiple property listing: Historic and Architectural Resources of Greensboro, North Carolina, 1880-1941

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

William S. Pink, Jr.
Signature of certifying official

2-12-92
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official _____

Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Education/school

Education/college

Education/education-related housing

Education/library

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Education/college

Education/education-related housing

Education/library

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Georgian Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick

walls brick

weatherboard

roof slate

other wood

stone

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

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Bennett College Historic District
Greensboro, Guilford Co., NC

Bennett College moved to its present campus between 1876 and 1878, shortly after its founding. By the end of the nineteenth century it consisted of two large brick buildings oriented towards East Washington Street and a few smaller frame buildings set to their south, none of which has survived. The present appearance of the campus is due to building activity in the early 1920s and, particularly, between 1934 and 1941.

The quadrangle [A on the accompanying sketch map] is the heart of the campus. Double rows of oaks and magnolias line its east and west sides, beyond which are the dormitories and classrooms which parallel it. Walkways radiate out from the flagpole at its center. Its south end terminates at the Bearden Gate [U] and Gorrell Street; its north end is shadowed by the tall steeple of Pfeiffer Chapel [H]. In addition to the trees flanking the quadrangle, numerous other shade trees, particularly magnolias, shade the buildings beyond the quad.

The oldest building in the historic district is the former President's House, now the Alumnae House [T]. A two-story, frame, Colonial Revival style dwelling, it was built around 1915 on the site of Annie Merner Hall. In 1937 it was moved to the south side of Gorrell Street to make way for Merner Hall. It continued as the residence of the president until 1955 when it was replaced by a new dwelling erected to its west, outside of the district.

Four buildings within the bounds of the district were built in the early 1920s: the John H. Race Administration Building [G], Wilbur F. Steele Hall [K], and Robert E. Jones Hall [P], all raised in 1922; and the former Carnegie Negro Library [E], built in 1924 on property at the northwest corner of the campus that had been donated to the city by the college. They are symmetrical Georgian Revival style buildings of rough dark brick capped by slate roofs.

By the mid-1930s Bennett's collegiate classical plan had been developed. The buildings constructed between 1934 and 1941 are all Georgian Revival style brick structures. They are two stories or a single story raised on a tall basement. Those to the east and west of the quadrangle are long, two-story structures set parallel to the green. They are connected to the quadrangle and each other by symmetrically aligned walkways.

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The Georgian Revival style on the campus is defined by brick walls and slate roofs, symmetrical placement of windows and entries, and the restrained use of classical ornament, primarily in wood or limestone. Most of the buildings have full-height Doric or Ionic porticoes or smaller classical enframements at entries. Limestone beltcourses and keystones, and brick or limestone quoins, further adorn many of the buildings.

The campus buildings outside of the bounds of the district are generally brick, slate-roofed, Georgian Revival style structures or, in one instance, an early twentieth century frame worker's dwelling acquired by the college in the past fifty years. The brick buildings are largely sited within the symmetrical plan of the campus. For example, the two-story, Georgian Revival style President's House, built in 1955, is aligned opposite the south end of the quadrangle and the chapel. Though not included in the district due to their age, the brick buildings do not diminish the integrity of setting, feeling, and association of the nominated section of the campus.

INVENTORY LIST

All of the resources within the Bennett College Historic District retain their integrity. They have been little altered and are well-maintained, although deferred maintenance has led to the deterioration of some exterior wooden trim at a few buildings.

A. Bennett College Quadrangle (contributing site - 1930s)

Bennett moved to its present site between 1876 and 1878. The heart of the modern campus is the quadrangle, the appearance of which probably dates from the mid or late 1930s. A perspective drawn by Atlanta architect Odis Clay Poundstone in 1936 pictures the quadrangle much as it is today. A grassy rectangle, it has concrete walkways which radiate symmetrically from a central flagpole to the surrounding buildings and to a sidewalk which runs along all four of its sides. Flanking both of its long sides are two rows of mature shade trees leading from Gorrell Street north towards the chapel. The outside rows, closest to the buildings, are formed largely of magnolias, the inside rows of oaks. The college's Georgian Revival style buildings are placed symmetrically around the quadrangle. Set behind them are additional rows of buildings and trees, primarily magnolias.

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Greensboro, Guilford Co., NCB. Ethel F. Black Hall (former Henry Pfeiffer Science Hall)
(contributing building - 1937)

This classroom building was built as the Henry Pfeiffer Science Hall. It is one of five campus buildings designed by Atlanta architect Odis Clay Poundstone. In 1968 it was renamed for trustee Ethel F. Black when a new Pfeiffer Science Hall was erected immediately to its west, outside of the district. A long, two-story, Georgian Revival style structure, Black Hall has perpendicular end wings that project beyond its front and rear facades. Its Flemish bond brickwork is accented by limestone beltcourses, keystones, and quoins and its hipped slate roof is punctuated by modillion blocks. Enframing its entry are Ionic columns capped by a broken pediment. A crossetted surround marks the bay above the entry. Topping the three central bays, which project slightly forward, is a pediment accented with modillion blocks and pierced by a semicircular window.

C. Annie Merner Hall (contributing building - completed in 1938)

Annie Merner Hall, designed by Odis Clay Poundstone, was begun in 1937 and completed in 1938. It is a long, two-story, Georgian Revival style dormitory with projecting, pedimented cross-wings at its ends and modillion blocks beneath its slate roof. The first floor windows of its central block are set in round-headed recesses topped by limestone keystones. Limestone also forms the belt courses that separate the basement from the first floor and the first floor from the second. Fluted pilasters enframe the front entry and seven segmental-arched, ventilator dormers are centered over the middle seven bays. A plaque in the front hallway says "Annie Merner Hall. Built and furnished by Mr. and Mrs. Henry Pfeiffer, New York City, N.Y. Named in honor of Annie Merner Pfeiffer, National Trustee, W.H.M.S. [Woman's Home Missionary Society], in 1937." The building is presently being renovated.

D. Thomas F. Holgate Library (contributing building - 1939)

The Holgate Library was named for a Northwestern University professor, who was a trustee of Bennett and treasurer of the Board of Education of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Its architect was Odis Clay Poundstone. A Georgian Revival style structure with Flemish bond brickwork, it features a single tall story raised high on a full basement. Visually separating the basement from the story above is a limestone beltcourse. A curving paired run of stone stairs climbs to

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the entry, which is set in a projecting central pavilion topped by a triangular pediment. Modillion blocks underpin the slate roof, which is topped by a frame cupola. A brightly sunlit reading room with a high coffered ceiling fills the northern third of the library's main floor.

E. Carnegie Negro Library (contributing building - 1924)

The former Carnegie Negro Library was originally part of the Greensboro public library system. Bennett donated to the city the land upon which the library was built in 1924, and in 1967 the college reacquired the property, along with the building. A small, rectangular, brick structure, the former library consists of a single story set upon a full basement and, at the west, a tiny reduced-height wing with a round-headed doorway. A central projecting pavilion holds the double-door main entry which is topped by a panel, its legend covered over, set in an oversized crosssetted surround. Arched multi-paned transoms top the entry and the tall main facade windows. All other windows have round-arched upper sashes. A prominent cornice rings the main block of the building. Simple stepped parapets with stone coping screen the flat roof of the main block and the wing. The plainly finished, vacant interior is divided into offices.

F. East Washington Street Gateposts (contributing structure - 1920)

Two rusticated piers of tan and red brick with rough-faced stone caps stand on East Washington Street to the rear of the Annie Merner Pfeiffer Chapel. Stone tablets set into them carry the legend "Perseverantia Onmiavincit 1920." Initially, East Washington was the main entrance to the campus; these apparently were the posts of the former front gate.

G. John H. Race Administration Building (contributing building - 1922)

The John H. Race Administration Building is one of the earliest surviving buildings on the Bennett campus. Labelled "Recitation" on a 1925 map of the campus, it now holds administrative offices. Dark red bricks face the Georgian Revival style, two-story, T-shaped building. The hipped slate roof is accented with a front facade gable and eyebrow attic vents. A one-story Doric portico enframes the central front entry. John H. Race was a Methodist Church publishing house official and a trustee of the college.

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Greensboro, Guilford Co., NCH. Annie Merner Pfeiffer Chapel and Little Theatre (contributing building - dedicated in 1941)

The Annie Merner Pfeiffer Chapel and Little Theatre is the college's most prominent structure, centered at the north end of the quadrangle. An eight-bay deep, rectangular, Georgian Revival building, it is clad in Flemish bond brickwork and topped by a soaring frame spire. Its full-height front portico is marked by a three-bay brick arcade on which Ionic pilasters are superimposed. Atop the portico is a triangular pediment adorned with modillion blocks, which also ring the remainder of the slate gable roof. The chapel, filling most of the building, has a balcony supported on attenuated columns and a barrel-vaulted ceiling decorated with bands of concrete ornament. Rectangular windows light its main floor; segmental-arched windows light the gallery above. A one-story rear wing holds a small contemporary theater. Its windows are segmental-arched with limestone keystones, mirroring the upper windows of the main block. Below the wing's flat roof runs a concrete band adorned with triglyphs and metopes. The projecting entry pavilion is formed of limestone blocks. The chapel and theater were designed by Odis Clay Poundstone. New York architect Jens Frederick Larson also likely had a hand in the building's design.

I. Bell Pavilion (non-contributing structure - 1953)J. Bennett College Bell (contributing object - 1878)

The oldest resource on the campus, the Bennett College Bell was cast in 1878 by the Meneely & Kimberly Foundry of Troy, New York. It was donated by the college's namesake, Lyman Bennett, and other citizens of Troy. On its body is a quotation from the Book of Isaiah: "Proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." No longer rung, it hangs from the triangular-pedimented roof of an open, frame, temple-like structure supported by four Doric columns. The pavilion was dedicated in March, 1953.

K. Wilbur F. Steele Hall (contributing building - 1922)

One of the oldest buildings on campus, Steele Hall is named for Wilbur F. Steele, president of Bennett from 1881 to 1889. Previously a dining hall, it was renovated in 1954 as a fine arts building and houses departmental offices, classrooms, art labs, music practice rooms, and studios. One-story tall and hip-roofed, its dark red bricks are identical to those of the Race Building, which was built in

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the same year. Its slightly projecting front entry bay is shaded by a Doric temple-front portico complete with dentils and triglyphs. A one-story, hip-roofed ell extends to the rear. Carolina Hall, a brick dormitory built prior to 1896 which burned in 1921, stood on the site of Steele Hall.

L. Rose Mae Withers Catchings Personal Development Complex
(non-contributing building - 1981)

The Catchings Complex is one of Bennett's few brick buildings that is not Georgian Revival in style. Long, low, and modern, with a large expanse of floor-to-ceiling glass windows and a sweeping asphalt-shingled roof, it was constructed in 1981 on the former site of the Maintenance Cottage.

M. Maintenance Cottage (contributing building - 1932; moved 1981)

A former residence associated with the college, the Maintenance Cottage was constructed in 1932 on the site of the Catchings Complex just to its west. It was shifted the short distance to its present site in 1981. German siding clads the rectangular one-story bungalow, which is topped by a gable-front roof with boxed cornices and returns. Four battered frame posts on brick piers support its recessed full-façade front porch. Its windows feature multi-paned upper sashes.

N. David D. Jones Student Union Building (non-contributing building - 1949)

Although built within the past fifty years and therefore non-contributing, the Jones Student Union is a brick, slate-roofed, Georgian Revival style structure that conforms with the design and materials of Bennett's contributing buildings. Two stories tall and H-shaped, it features Flemish bond brickwork, limestone quoins, modillion blocks, parapet gable ends, and a cupola. A full-height, Ionic, temple-front portico with modillion blocks shades its front facade. To either side of the portico are subsidiary entries marked by one-story Doric columns. A plainly finished, flat-roofed, two-story wing projects from the building's rear. Dr. David Dallas Jones was president of the college from 1926 to 1955.

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Greensboro, Guilford Co., NCO. Merner Pfeiffer Heating Plant (contributing building - 1935)

A square brick building, the Pfeiffer Plant is a utilitarian structure lit by large rectangular windows and adorned with minimal brick detailing. Set over its entry is a long limestone panel incised with the words "Merner Pfeiffer Plant." A metal monitor crosses its flat parapeted roof; the single story beneath it now houses a student laundry. The building's deep basement holds its power plant facilities. Set into a hillside, the basement opens onto Bennett Street at the east. Freestanding at the southern edge of the building is a tall, round, brick smokestack.

P. Robert E. Jones Hall (contributing building - 1922)

Named for the an early black minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Jones Hall is one of the oldest buildings on the Bennett campus. A long, two-story, Georgian Revival style dormitory, it features a prominent, full-height, Doric temple-front portico. Blank brick panels separate its first- and second-story windows, which have rusticated stone sills. Like Bennett's other brick buildings, Jones Hall's hipped roof is clad in slate.

Q. Carrie Barge Hall (contributing building - dedicated in 1941)

Odis Clay Poundstone designed this Georgian Revival style dormitory. A long two-story building, it has a slate gable-end roof marked by a modillion block cornice. Its Flemish bond brickwork is punctuated by limestone beltcourses and, at the segmental-arched first-story windows, keystones. The projecting central pavilion is pedimented. A semi-circular, flat-roofed, one-story Doric portico shades its entry, which is enframed by a leaded glass fanlight and sidelights.

R. Annie Merner Pfeiffer Hall (contributing building - dedicated in 1934)

This Georgian Revival style dormitory was designed by Greensboro architect Charles C. Hartmann. A long two-story structure, it is topped by a slate gable-end roof pierced by pedimented dormers. Its stretcher bond brickwork is accented by brick quoins, a wide limestone cornice, and limestone keystones at the windows. Limestone also forms its full-height Doric pilasters and the pediment at the three bay central pavilion of the main facade. The entry bay features a

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fanlight and sidelights at the door and a Palladian window at the second story.

S. Home Management House (contributing building - 1938)

The first occupants of this former house were Nathaniel and Helen Dett, both of whom were instructors at Bennett. The simply finished, weatherboarded, frame structure is two stories tall with an asphalt-shingled gable-end roof. Attached to its west side is a one-story gable-end wing. At its east side is a one-story shed wing.

T. Alumnae House (former President's House) - (contributing building - c.1915; moved 1937)

This two-story, weatherboarded, Colonial Revival style house was built around 1915 to be the residence of Bennett's president. It was moved in 1937 to make way for Annie Merner Hall, on the site of which it stood. It continued to be the president's home until 1955, when a new Georgian Revival style residence for the president was built to its west. At heart a hip-roofed box, the house has a two-story front projection and rear ell, and a one-story side bay, which break up its strict geometry. Tuscan porch columns, cornerboards, wide plain friezeboards, hip-roofed dormers, and a corbelled chimney stack add further variety.

T1. Garage (contributing building - c.1937)

This weatherboarded, frame, gable-front, two-car garage served the former President's House, to the rear of which it stands. It was probably built in 1937 when the house was moved.

U. Catherine Kennedy Bearden Way (contributing structure - c.1941)

The southern end of the quadrangle terminates at brick walls and posts and a wrought iron gate. The brick posts step back from Gorrell Street, connected by a semicircular run of iron pickets. The tall central gate posts, which support a decorative iron gate, are topped by concrete caps and acorns. Affixed to the east post is a plaque with the legend "The Catherine Kennedy Bearden Way." The gates, posts, and walls were probably built around 1941, completing the bottom end of the quadrangle. From Gorrell Street one looks through the gates, up the center of the quadrangle to the chapel. Catherine Kennedy Bearden was a Greensboro resident and dormitory matron.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Education

Black Ethnic Heritage

Architecture

Period of Significance

1915 to 1941

Significant Dates

1922

1926

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Poundstone, Odis Clay

Hartmann, Charles C.

Larson, Jens Frederick

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

See continuation sheet

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Bennett College Historic District
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Summary of Significance

Since its establishment as a primary and secondary school in 1873, Bennett College has been one of Greensboro's most significant black institutions. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it was one of the few schools in the city that provided education beyond the primary grades for black children. Following a major reorganization in 1926, it phased out its coeducational secondary school program and became a four-year women's college. It remains one of only two black women's colleges in the country. Bennett moved to its present location shortly after its founding. Its well-conceived and carefully executed campus was primarily developed in the early 1920s and from 1934 to 1941. In those years its agricultural fields and early buildings were replaced by handsome Georgian Revival style brick structures symmetrically oriented around a central quadrangle shaded by mature trees. The architects active in its design and planning included Odus Clay Poundstone of Atlanta, Charles C. Hartmann of Greensboro, and Jens Frederick Larson of New York.

Bennett's history is part of both of Greensboro's associated historic contexts, particularly the subsections concerning schools and colleges. It is locally significant as part of the city's black ethnic heritage, which is discussed throughout both historic contexts, particularly within those subsections dealing with education and with neighborhood and suburban growth. As North Carolina's only historic (and current) black female college, Bennett is of statewide significance; furthermore, it is nationally important as one of the country's two surviving historic black female colleges. The school's Georgian Revival style buildings and campus are distinguished representatives of the educational, religious, and civic buildings discussed at Property Type 5 of the multiple property documentation form for Greensboro. The district's period of significance, 1915 to 1941, is bracketed by the earliest and latest construction dates of its contributing buildings and structures.

Bennett is associated with the United Methodist Church and a focal point of the campus is its chapel. The district meets Criteria Consideration A because it derives its significance from its architecture and design and from its central role in education and African-American life in Greensboro.

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Greensboro, Guilford Co., NCNineteenth-Century History and Appearance

Bennett College was founded in 1873 through the inspiration of former slaves and the efforts of the Freedman's Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church (Scarlette 1989:I-1). On July 19, 1873, a meeting was held at the black Warnersville Methodist Episcopal Church to study creating a school for blacks in the city. Four days later, it was announced that a normal college for educating black teachers was to be constructed in Greensboro that year (Greensboro Record, October 11, 1972).

Classes were first held in the basement of the Warnersville church, no longer standing, at the corner of present Ashe and Lee streets. Dr. Edward O. Thayer, who came to Greensboro in December, 1875, and was to be the president of the school from 1877 to 1881, recalled its earliest days. "The seminary was a day school," he wrote, "held in the unfinished basement of [the church]. I taught, with the help of one negro assistant, classes from first reader to theology" (Greensboro Record, November 14, 1940).

Chartered by North Carolina as "Bennett College" in 1889, the school was first called "Bennett School" and then "Bennett Seminary." It was named in honor of Lyman Bennett of Troy, New York, who in the mid-1870s gave \$10,000 for the erection of Bennett Hall, a classroom and dormitory building (Scarlette 1989:I-1-2). In the 1830s Bennett had become one of the first manufacturers of collars in Troy, a major industry that lent Troy the nickname the "Collar City." A leading citizen, involved in textiles, banking, railroads, and politics, he was also active in the Methodist Church (Personal communication with Robert E. Hudson, local history and genealogy librarian, Troy Public Library, May 29, 1991; Troy Times, February 10, 1879; Anderson 1897:276; Weise 1897:276-277). His beneficence towards Bennett indirectly led to his death on February 9, 1879, at the age of 68. According to his obituary:

His sympathy for the freedmen led him to build an academy at Greensboro, N.C., to be devoted to their use. In his honor the institution was named the Bennett seminary. Almost his last act of philanthropy was to donate to the academy a bell. The disease which resulted in death was contracted while he was out on an errand connected with this bell - a severe cold which induced paralysis (Troy Times, February 10, 1879).

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The bell is still located on the campus, although it is no longer regularly rung for classes by a "Bennett Belle," as it was ceremoniously for many years (Greensboro Daily News, March 8, 1953).

Bennett College moved to its present location on East Washington and Gorrell streets east of downtown Greensboro between 1876 and 1878. In 1875 the Freedman's Aid Society, for \$2,156.37, purchased about twenty acres of land upon which they already had three houses (Guilford County Deed Book 51, Page 7). Two years later they purchased about seven more acres for \$708.75 (Guilford County Deed Book 57, Page 63). They rounded out their purchases in 1886, when they bought six lots of the Thomas McMahon tract for \$1,500.00 (Guilford County Deed Book 73, Page 14).

Enrollment climbed with the move to the new campus. In the school's first few years its average attendance had been about seventy-five, its students ranging in age from fourteen to thirty-five. In 1888 there were 130 students attending the school and three years later the number had climbed to 222, with a faculty of seven (Brawley 1974:157).

By the turn of the century Bennett consisted of two major brick buildings and some smaller frame structures. Bennett Hall, the main building, was a rectangular, three-story tall, brick structure topped by a mansard roof. It was first pictured, along with four frame dwellings and a frame stable to its south, in the 1888 Sanborn fire insurance company maps of the city. By 1896 a second three-story, brick, mansard-roofed structure--Carolina Hall--had been built as a dormitory just east of the main building. The two were substantial structures, facing north towards East Washington Street in a grassy lawn dotted with shade trees (Greensboro Record, 1910). To their southwest, on what is now campus grounds, stood the Kent Industrial Home for Girls, which opened the doors of its original building to fourteen girls in 1885. Kent had been built as a dormitory and home economics school by the Woman's Home Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church at the behest of Mrs. Anna Kent of the Troy conference. The original frame building burned and was rebuilt in 1911 and was expanded and rebuilt again in 1921 (Guilford County Deed Book 69, Page 305; Brummitt 1930:142-143; Brawley 1974:162). Rounding out the major buildings, a frame dormitory had been constructed by 1896 south of the brick buildings and east of Kent Hall (Sanborn Map and Publishing Co. 1888, 1891, 1896). Much of the remainder of the school's approximately thirty-eight acres were not developed. In

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fact, part of the campus was reportedly planted in corn and turnips as late as 1926 (Winston-Salem Journal and Sentinel, January 27, 1952).

None of the nineteenth-century buildings survives. All but one of the frame houses had been removed by the beginning of the century and the remaining structures fell to the minor rebuilding of the campus in the early 1920s and its major reconstruction between 1934 and 1941 (Sanborn Map Company 1902, 1913, 1919, 1925).

The Twentieth Century and the Establishment of the Women's College

Bennett remained a small coeducational institution devoted to secondary school education during the first quarter of the twentieth century. In 1926, however, modern Bennett was born. By the early 1920s the school's enrollment had shrunk, at least in part as a result of the belated appearance of a number of other black high schools in the area (The State, July 23, 1949). It was the advent of these high schools that gave Bennett the opportunity to phase out its lower-level programs and transform itself into a four-year college (Brummitt 1930:143-145).

In 1926, under the joint auspices of the Woman's Home Missionary Society, which supported the adjacent Kent Home, and the Board of Education of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the school was reorganized and renamed "Bennett College for Women" (Brummitt 1930:143-145). The campus at that time consisted of about eight buildings, six of them brick, "neat in appearance and of good construction" (Klein 1928:499). Four of these eight buildings, and a fifth not counted among them, still stand. The oldest, the former President's House, now the Alumnae House [T], was built around 1915. A frame, Colonial Revival style building, it was moved in 1937 to the south side of Gorrell Street, its site given over to Annie Merner Hall (Scarlette 1989:AP-9; Greensboro City Directories).

The John H. Race Administration Building, Wilbur F. Steele Hall, and Robert E. Jones Hall, substantial brick structures, were built around 1922 and dedicated in 1924. Their erection was prompted by the 1921 burning of Carolina Hall, which had held the boys' dormitory, the auditorium, and several classrooms. Steele Hall was erected on its site (Brawley 1974:161; Klein 1928:499-500).

A fifth early building, not included among the eight but also neat in appearance and of good construction, is the former Carnegie

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Negro Library. In 1906 the Carnegie Foundation offered Greensboro \$10,000 towards the construction of a black public library. Bennett donated land at the northwest corner of the campus to the city for the library, which was designed in a style similar to that of the Race Building and Steele and Jones Halls. It opened in 1924 with a 150-book collection (Arnett 1955:98-99; Klein 1928:499-500). Located at a corner of the campus, the library served Bennett's student body as well as the surrounding black community. A building was not constructed by the college specifically as a library until the Thomas E. Holgate Library was raised in 1939 just to the south of the Carnegie Library. In 1967 Bennett reacquired the property along with the library, which it divided into offices (Scarlette 1989:AP-12). It now stands vacant.

The school's transformation into a four-year female college was rapid. In 1926 its first ten college freshmen matriculated, joining 151 high school students (Jones 1941; Scarlette 1989:I-3.) In 1927 forty-three college freshman, all female, enrolled. Plans were made to add in the following year two new teachers to the eight-teacher, all-black staff (Klein 1928:502). In 1930 Bennett had 138 college students and granted its first four bachelor's degrees. By 1933 the phasing out of the high school program was complete (Scarlette 1989:I-3).

In the 1920s three black women's colleges were established in the United States--Bennett, Spelman College, and Barber College for Women. All three had their beginnings in late nineteenth-century seminaries. Spelman College was founded in Atlanta in 1881 as Spelman Seminary. In 1924 it was converted to a four-year college (Klein 1928:295). Barber College for Women in Anniston, Alabama was opened as Barber Memorial Seminary in 1896. In 1924 its name was changed and a four-year college division was begun (Klein 1928:108). Only Bennett and Spelman continue as black women's colleges.

Bennett College's present campus, with handsome Georgian Revival style buildings carefully sited around a rectangular quadrangle, was developed in the 1930s, largely due to the efforts of President David Dallas Jones and philanthropists Henry and Annie Merner Pfeiffer. Dr. Jones (1887-1956) came to Bennett as president in 1926 from Atlanta, where he was a businessman and a member of the city's Commission on Interracial Affairs. Born in Greensboro in 1887, he had earned a bachelor's degree from Wesleyan University in Connecticut in 1911 and was to receive a master's degree from Columbia University and an LL.D.

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from Howard University in the 1930s. Dr. Jones was president until shortly before his death in 1956. Under his tenure, Bennett became an established, successful, four-year college (New York Times, January 25, 1956; Greensboro Daily News, January 25, 1956).

The Pfeiffers, who supported numerous religious and educational institutions associated with the Methodist Episcopal Church and were especially interested in black colleges, gave more than \$850,000 to Bennett from the early 1930s through 1946 (The Future Outlook, January 12, 1946). Five buildings bear, or once bore, their names: Pfeiffer Hall, dedicated in 1934; the Merner Pfeiffer Heating Plant, erected in 1935; the former Henry Pfeiffer Science Hall, now Black Hall, erected in 1937; Annie Merner Hall, completed in 1938; and the Annie Merner Pfeiffer Chapel and Little Theatre, dedicated in 1941.

Henry Pfeiffer (1857-1939) was president of William R. Warner & Co., pharmaceutical manufacturers (New York Times, April 14, 1939). Annie Merner Pfeiffer (1860-1946) continued the couple's giving following his death in 1939, until her own passing in 1946 (The New York Times, January 9, 1946; North Carolina Christian Advocate, January 17, 1946). The Pfeiffers' connection with Bennett came through their active support of Methodist causes and Mrs. Pfeiffer's particular philanthropic bent. According to a local obituary, she had first become interested in "the problems of the South" when, following her marriage in 1882, she had traveled through the region with her husband on a pharmaceutical sales trip (The Future Outlook, January 12, 1946).

Bennett has continued to grow in the past fifty years, adding students, faculty, and new Georgian Revival style buildings placed in conformity to the symmetrical plan of the campus. In 1940, 356 students were enrolled there. By 1955, when Dr. Jones retired, there were 475 students and the campus had expanded to forty-two acres. When Dr. Willa B. Player, Jones's successor, retired in 1966, Bennett had 650 students and fifty-two faculty members on a fifty-five acre campus. The campus has since stabilized at fifty-five acres and the size of its student body has steadied as well. During the 1988-89 academic year there were 632 students enrolled at the college (Brawley 1974:166; Scarlette 1989:I-1-4, IV-2).

Architects and Planners

Three architects are known to have been associated with the

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design of the college: Charles C. Hartmann, Odis Clay Poundstone, and Jens Frederick Larson. Hartmann was Greensboro's most prominent early twentieth-century architect. His local designs include three buildings individually listed on the National Register: the Jefferson Standard Building, the Central Fire Station, and the Julian Price House. With Mrs. Julius W. Cone, chairman of the building committee, Hartmann was put in charge of the planning of Pfeiffer Hall, which was built in 1934 (Greensboro Daily News, 1937). He not only assist in planning the building, perhaps the college's finest, but he was also its architect ("Study List Application--Pfeiffer Hall," July 12, 1988).

Odis Clay Poundstone was the architect of five campus buildings: the 1937 Henry Pfeiffer Science Hall, now Black Hall; the 1938 Annie Merner Hall; the 1939 Thomas F. Holgate Library; the 1941 Carrie Barge Hall; and the Annie Merner Pfeiffer Chapel and Little Theatre, dedicated in 1941 ("Study List Application--Black Hall, Merner Hall, Holgate Library, Barge Hall, and Annie Merner Pfeiffer Chapel" July 12, 1988; Greensboro Daily News, 1937). A Georgia architect, he had established the Atlanta firm of Lockwood and Poundstone in 1920 and joined the AIA and its Georgia chapter in 1923. Following the end of the partnership in 1932, he continued to practice independently in Atlanta, with a short hiatus in Alabama in the late 1950s, until 1960. He died in 1974 (The Atlanta Historical Bulletin, September, 1943:106, 162; personal communications with Tony Wrenn, AIA archivist, May 8, 1991, and Barbara Forbes, Atlanta AIA, May 9 and 13, 1991). Poundstone was not a black architect, although the engagement by Bennett during the Depression, when numerous nearby architects were readily available, of a little-known architect from as far afield as Atlanta might suggest otherwise (personal communications with Atlanta architects Leon G. Allain, May 24, 1991, and Joseph W. Robinson, Sr., May 29, 1991). He was probably an acquaintance of Dr. Jones from his stay in Atlanta prior to assuming Bennett's presidency.

Poundstone drew a perspective of the campus in 1936 (Greensboro Daily News, November 14, 1936). Its appearance is much as it is today, with a few exceptions. The proposed chapel, with a theater and religious education building as wings, is located at the south end of the quadrangle, on Gorrell Street, rather than at the north end. A proposed dormitory is shown south of the Henry Pfeiffer Science Hall, then under construction. This dormitory, Carrie Barge Hall, was built in 1941, although at a different location.

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New York architect Jens Frederick Larson also had a hand in the location or design of the chapel and perhaps in the later development of the campus as well. According to a newspaper account, when Dr. Jones was ready to have the chapel built, he approached Larson for advice and Larson "made a trip to Greensboro at his own expense and solved the chapel problem. Since then he has served as the unofficial and unpaid architect of Bennett College" (Winston-Salem Journal and Sentinel, January 27, 1952). The symmetry, formality, and Georgian architecture of the Bennett campus must have appealed to Larson, who was to gain public popularity in North Carolina in the early 1950s for his traditional design of the new campus of Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem (Bishir, Brown, Lounsbury, and Wood 1990:361-363).

The design of the campus continues to conform with that of Poundstone's perspective of 1936. Its quadrangle looks almost identical to that pictured in the perspective and all but two of its post-1941 buildings are Georgian Revival style buildings oriented within the symmetrical plan of the campus.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acres of property 16

UTM References

A	17	609800	3992190
	Zone	Easting	Northing
C	17	609950	3391620

B	17	610150	3992020
	Zone	Easting	Northing
D	17	609650	3391900

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of the Bennett College Historic District are shown as the line on the accompanying base map.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Marvin A. Brown
 organization Greensboro Preservation Society date 9-15-91
 street & number 447 W. Washington St. telephone 919-272-5003
 city or town Greensboro state NC zip code 27402

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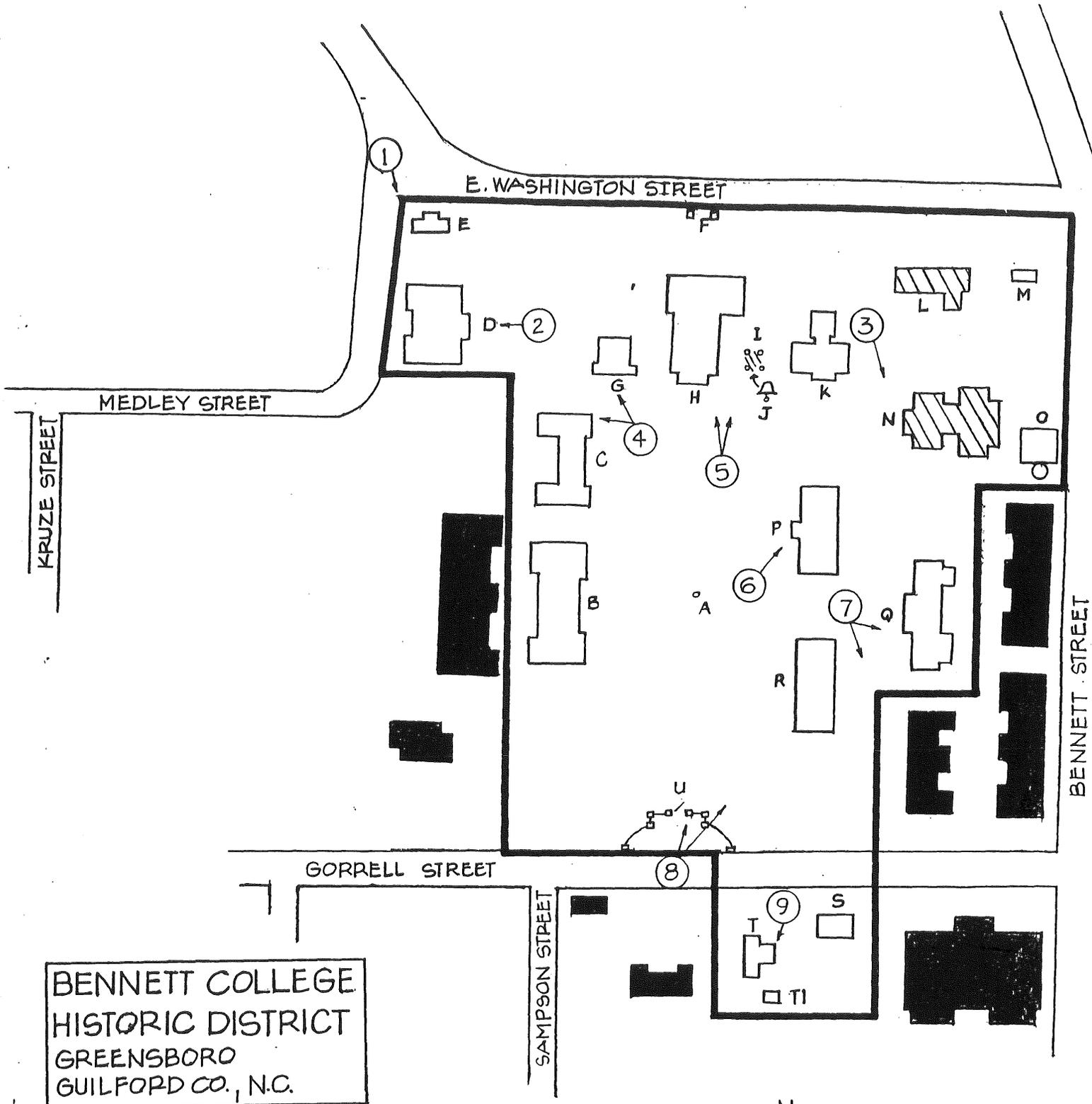
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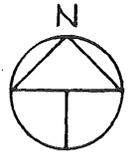
Bennett College Historic District
Greensboro, Guilford Co., NC

The boundaries of the Bennett College Historic District were drawn to include the quadrangle at the center of the campus and the early historic resources around it. Excluded from the district are campus buildings that are less than fifty years old and a former house that was not originally connected with the college. These resources are located beyond the eastern and western edges of the district and at the southwest along Gorrell Street. The property owned by the college north of the district boundaries, across East Washington Street, has no buildings on it, but only a paved parking lot.

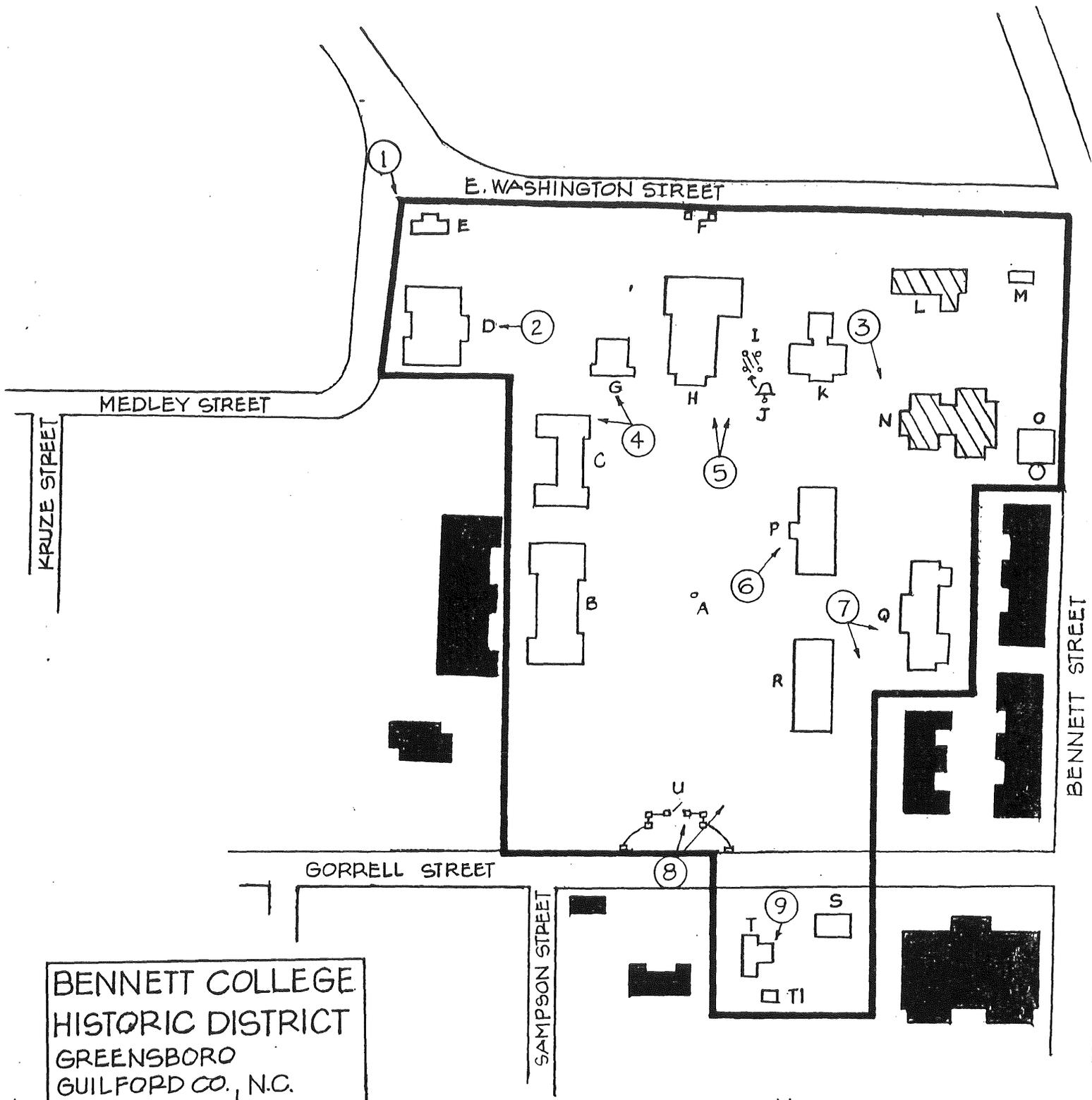


BENNETT COLLEGE
 HISTORIC DISTRICT
 GREENSBORO
 GUILFORD CO., N.C.

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- ▨ - NON-CONTRIBUTING RESOURCE
- - CAMPUS RESOURCE OUTSIDE OF DISTRICT

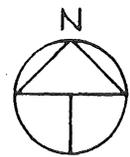


SCALE: 1 IN. = 200 FT.
 DATE: 9/91



BENNETT COLLEGE
 HISTORIC DISTRICT
 GREENSBORO
 GUILFORD CO., N.C.

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